

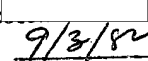
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Routing Slip

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Executive Registry

82-5831

August 30, 1982

Mr. William J. Casey
Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Casey,

I must express my displeasure and disapproval of your comments to the national American Legion convention in Chicago August 24, 1982 saying America should "get rid of the Freedom of Information Act." Frankly, I am appalled by such a statement coming from a government official, regardless of which agency is involved.

For your information, the Freedom of Information Act became law to protect the rights of the American citizenry. It rightfully allows Americans access to government documents so that they may be well informed, if they so desire, of their government's workings. The act is designed to make it more difficult to perpetrate, if not eliminate, abuses by the government, especially the Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Thanks to the Freedom of Information Act, many abuses have been uncovered. Without it, leaders such as yourself can run rampant over the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It's been done in the past and, given the current inclinations of the Regan administration, this disregard for rights and civil liberties would have escalated, in the name of national security, had the act not existed.

In addition, the act prohibits government officials from hiding behind their blunders, inefficiencies and poor work by hiding files.

The CIA's files, and for that matter any other agency's files, are permitted to be withheld from disclosure under a "national security" provision—one of seven exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act. I believe the seven exemptions are sufficient to withhold records. As for foreign agents having "legal license to poke into our files," I'm sure there is not much those agents can discern from your agency's files that is not readily obtainable from other sources, both within and without the government.

DCI
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Mr. Casey, you must remember that government is not a private corporation which can keep its operations out of the public eye and away from public scrutiny. The government exists for the people, not those in power. May I suggest that if you cannot play by the rule, i.e., the Freedom of Information Act is one of them, then why don't you resign?

I would rather see the dismantling of the Central Intelligence Agency than any weakening of the Freedom of Information Act. After all, we are a democracy, not a totalitarian, military regime which the Reagan administration is attempting to assemble.

Sincerely,

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P.S. Go ahead and place my name in your files, classify me as a subversive, un-American and unpatriotic. I won't mind being under surveillance from time to time, if your agents have nothing better to do. It just further illustrates my point that we are becoming less tolerant of individuals who speak out, and hence, the turn toward a less free society.